

THE CLAIMS

The claims of the application, as amended, are:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently amended) A method according to claim ~~1 or 2~~, characterised in that claim 22, wherein the temperature-responsive device (30) is arranged substantially in contact with the lower surface (10) of the cooking plate (4).
4. (Currently amended) A method according to claim ~~1, 2 or 3~~, characterised in that claim 22, wherein the cooking plate (4) comprises glass-ceramic material.
5. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim~~, characterised in that claim 22, wherein the temperature sensing element (38) operates in closed loop manner with the control means (28), for controlling energising of the electric heater (12) from the power supply (24).
6. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim~~, characterised in that claim 22, wherein means (62) is provided to shield the temperature sensing element (38) and a corresponding overlying region of the lower surface (10) of the cooking plate (4) from direct thermal radiation from the at least one electric heating element (20).
7. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 6, characterised in that wherein the shielding means (62) comprises thermal insulation material.

8. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim, characterised in that~~ claim 22, wherein the temperature-responsive device (30) is arranged adjacent to the lower surface (10) of the cooking plate (4) at a peripheral region of the heating zone (4A).

9. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim, characterised in that~~ claim 22, wherein the temperature sensing element (38) comprises a material whose electrical resistance changes as a function of temperature.

10. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 9, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the material is provided in film form on a supporting substrate (32).

11. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 9, wherein ~~or 10, characterised in that~~ the material comprises platinum.

12. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim, characterised in that~~ claim 22, wherein the control means (28) comprises microprocessor-based electronic circuitry.

13. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim, characterised in that~~ claim 22, wherein the predetermined boiling levels comprise a low or simmer boiling level, a medium boiling level and a high or rolling boiling level.

14. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 13, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the low or simmer boiling level is associated with a temperature sensed by the temperature sensing element (38) in a range of about 140 to about 190 degrees Celsius.

15. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 14, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the low or simmer boiling level is associated with a temperature sensed by the temperature sensing element (38) of about 170 degrees Celsius.

16. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any of claims 13 to 15, characterised in that~~ claim 13, wherein the medium boiling level is associated with a temperature sensed by the temperature sensing element (38) in a range of about 160 to about 210 degrees Celsius.

17. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 16, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the medium boiling level is associated with a temperature sensed by the temperature sensing element (38) of about 190 degrees Celsius.

18. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any of claims 13 to 17, characterised in that~~ claim 13, wherein the high or rolling boiling level is associated with a temperature sensed by the temperature sensing element (38) above about 210 degrees Celsius.

19. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 18, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the high or rolling boiling level is associated with a temperature sensed by the temperature sensing element (38) of about 220 degrees Celsius.

20. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any of claims 13 to 19, characterised in that~~ claim 13, wherein selection of the high or rolling boiling level results in operation of the heater (12) at substantially full power.

21. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim, characterised in that~~ claim 22, wherein the manual input selection means (106) comprises one or more switch means.

22. (New) A method of controlling boiling level in an electric cooking assembly (2), the assembly comprising:

a cooking plate (4) having a lower surface (10), in contact with which is supported an electric heater (12), and an upper surface (6) adapted to receive a cooking utensil (8) containing a material to be subjected to boiling on a heating zone (4A) overlying the electric heater;

the electric heater incorporating at least one electric heating element (20) and a first temperature-responsive device (120) for controlling the temperature of the cooking plate (4) within predetermined limits;

control means (28) for controlling energising of the electric heater from a power supply (24); and

manual input selection means (106) associated with the control means,
the method comprising the steps of:

providing a second temperature-responsive device (30) arranged adjacent to the lower surface of the cooking plate and adapted to monitor temperature of the cooking utensil

through the cooking plate, the second temperature-responsive device incorporating a temperature sensing element (38) having an electrical parameter which changes as a function of temperature and which is electrically connected to the control means (28);

providing on the manual input selection means (106) a plurality of predetermined user-selectable boiling levels for the material in the cooking utensil;

associating in the control means (28) each predetermined boiling level with a predetermined temperature sensed by the temperature sensing element (38), the predetermined sensed temperature being offset relative to an actual temperature representative of each respective boiling level, the offset being different for each respective boiling level; and

controlling the boiling level of the material in the cooking utensil (8) by energising the heater (12) at a corresponding power level.